

# Newcastle-Emlyn Urban District Council.

## Public Health Report for 1952

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year ending December 31st, 1952.

### Vital Statistics and Social Conditions.

Area—208 acres.

Population—751.

Number of inhabited houses—258.

Rateable Value—£3,152.

Product of a penny rate—£12/5/8,

Newcastle-Emlyn is a residential and market town situated on the River Teifi in West Carmarthenshire, serving the needs of a scattered agricultural community living in the adjacent countryside which includes parts of Cardiganshire and North Pembrokeshire. The population remains constant but there is an influx of visitors during the holiday season. Development of the town has been seriously impaired by the smallness of the urban area. A milk products factory, shirt factory, and egg grading station provide employment for a limited number. A fair proportion of residents have come to live here in retirement.

### Births and Deaths.

Total Live Births—5, all males, one being illegitimate. Crude Birth Rate—6.6 per 1,000. The standardised birth rate, used for the comparison with the birth rate in other areas and calculated with the aid of a Comparability Factor provided by the Registrar General was 7.5 per 1,000 Birth Rate for England and Wales—15.3 per 1,000. There were no stillbirths, and no deaths of infants under 4 weeks or 1 year of age.

Deaths during the year were as follows :

4 Males and 6 Females—total 10. Crude death rate—13.3 per 1,000. Standardised death rate—10.7 per 1,000. Death rate for England and Wales—11.3 per 1,000. Of the deaths, 4 were due to vascular lesions of the nervous system, and 1 each due to tuberculosis, cancer and Weil's disease. Average age at death was 62.4 years.

### Provision of Health Services.

**HOSPITAL, LABORATORY & AMBULANCE FACILITIES.—**The District is served mainly by the West Wales General Hospital at Carmarthen (20 miles distant) and Cardigan Hospital (10 miles) with provision for cases of infectious diseases at Tumble Isolation Hospital. The Public Health Laboratory at Carmarthen plays a vital part in the maintenance of Public Health in West Wales and is always ready to assist medical practitioners in the investigation of disease. Transport facilities are provided by ambulances based at Carmarthen, Llandyssul and Cardigan. It is regretted that the ambulance station which had existed at Newcastle-Emlyn for a number of years prior to the introduction of the National Health Service, has now been closed.

**HOME NURSING, MIDWIFERY & INFANT WELFARE SERVICES.**—Home nursing and midwifery are undertaken by one District Nurse/Midwife who is resident in the town. An Infant Welfare Clinic is held fortnightly.

### Infectious Diseases.

The population was remarkably free from the commoner infectious diseases this year, only 3 cases, 2 of whooping cough and 1 of bronchopneumonia being recorded. No case of diphtheria has been notified for a number of years, thanks to immunisation. We must beware of complacency, however, and I continue to urge immunisation for all infants under 1 year with a re-inforcing dose at school age. Immunisation figures for Newcastle-Emlyn during 1952 are—

Age 0—4 years.	Number who completed full Primary Course	7
Age 5—15 years.	Number who completed full Primary Course	0
	Number who received re-inforcing injection	0

I have to record the death of a young adult from Weil's disease, contracted through immersion in infected water. This disease is present in rats over the entire world, and usually occurs sporadically in this country. Transmission is, generally, by contact with water polluted with the urine of infected rats. The main method of control of the disease is by the energetic destruction of rats by poisoning, trapping, rat proofing and reducing food supplies.

### Tuberculosis.

3 fresh cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, ages ranging between 24 and 39, were notified during the year. There was 1 death from pulmonary tuberculosis, giving a death rate from this disease, of 1.33 per 1,000. The number of cases on the register are :—

Date	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Total
1/1/52	5 Males	1 Female	6
31/12/52	6 Males, 2 Females	1 Female	9

The Chest Physician holds a Clinic in the town twice a month when new or suspected cases are investigated and old ones followed up.

### Housing.

In December, the first 6 permanent houses to be erected by this Authority were completed and occupied. There are no others under construction at present. There is still an acute shortage of houses in the town and some of the older cottages are unsatisfactory. It is, therefore, essential that further building work be undertaken as soon as possible.

### Water Supply.

The town is provided with an ample supply of wholesome water throughout the year. Progress has been made with the replacement of the old, corroded mains and a stretch on the Carmarthen Road between the town and the Smithy, has been completed. Materials are available for renewing the remainder of the track and this work be proceeded with as labour allows. Samples of the raw water are sent periodically for analysis and the reports from the laboratory are uniformly satisfactory.

## Sewerage, Drainage & Scavenging.

The sewerage system continues to operate without serious breakdown. Minor repairs are made as the necessity arises. As reported previously, a number of cottages in the town are without a water carriage system.

Refuse is collected by the open cart method, once weekly, and dumped a quarter of a mile outside the town.

## Rodent Control.

The Council employs a rodent operator on a part time basis and premises and dumps are inspected and baited regularly, the principal poisons used being warfarin, zinc phosphide, and red squill.

## General Remarks.

The year was noteworthy in that it saw the completion and occupation of the first six houses to be built by the Urban District Council. Housing continues to be a major problem and I trust that new sites will shortly be found and a new building programme put into operation.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

**S. ROBERTS,**

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.M.S.S.A.,

Medical Officer of Health.



